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ABSTRACT

This eighth grade lesson plan asks students to work in groups of four. They must: (1) decide whether to join the Union Army or the Confederate Army; (2) decide under which General they will serve and in which battles they will fight; and (3) once this decision has been made, assign the following roles for team or group members: photographer, reporter, biographer, and soldier. The lesson is meant to provide an opportunity for a class to cover a broad spectrum of the U.S. Civil War as possible in the shortest amount of time possible. For the students, the lesson plan gives background information about common practices during the Civil War; assigns and explains the task; and discusses self evaluation. For the teacher, the lesson plan gives grade/unit; addresses California academic standards for eighth grade; and suggests lesson extensions. Includes a group evaluation sheet. (BT)

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Schools of California Online Resources for Education (SCORE): Connecting California's Classrooms to the World

When Johnny Went Marching Off

8th Grade Activity by Karen Harness

SO 034 250

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When Johnny Went Marching Off...

A Civil War Documentation Team Activity

Introduction

It was a common practice during the Civil War for a group of young men from a small town to form a company and join the army of their choice together. They were subsequently allowed to remain together, fighting and dying as well. Less commonly, but not unheard of, a woman would decide to conceal her identity as a woman and join a company in the army as a male. Women also served in proximity to companies of soldiers as laundresses and cooks.

Scenario for Students

Four young people from the same community have gone to war. One of them has become quite expert in the new technology of photography and spends his/her days recording battle sites, groups of soldiers, ordnance, etc. He becomes the company photographer. One is a reporter writing accounts of battles and troop movements. A third gave up a career as a teacher, but not his/her interest in the lives of leaders. He/she writes biographies of army generals when not serving as "aide de camp" to the General. The fourth is an ordinary soldier (or laundress/cook) who, as often as possible, writes letters to family and friends back home about daily life in the army.

After the War, three of the friends meet at the home of the photographer. The soldier, unfortunately, died in battle. The family and friends of the dead soldier (laundress/cook) have, however, made his/her letters available to the three survivors. The survivors have decided to collaborate on a group memoir for publication.

Note: With your teacher, please review your school's acceptable use policy for work on the Internet. Also, links to the Web often change. Tell your teacher when you find a poor link in this guide.

Student Tasks

As a group, decide whether to join the Union or Confederate army. Then decide under which General you will serve and in which battles you will fight. To help you decide, consult your textbook and/or search the Web for "Civil War battles." Once your decision has been made, assign the following roles:

Photographer:

Essentially, you will be following the army your friends have decided to join. Your job is to find photographs of the general of that army, other soldiers in that army, battlefields where your friends fight, military equipment, etc. There are many photographs available, as the Civil War was the first war to be documented photographically. You will also write a letter home about a meeting you had with Matthew Brady, telling your family about Mr. Brady and his work.

For information on Matthew Brady, consult encyclopedias, biographical dictionaries, biographies, and the Web. Helpful Web sites include:

http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/cwphome.html
http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/irish/learn/resources/visual.html

Reporter

As the reporter on the scene, you will be writing accounts of battles in which your friends are engaged. Include in your report accounts of events from before, during, and after the battle. Also include information about troop movements, armaments, supplies, troop numbers and casualties. Describe the battlefield. Northern journalists were known to include personal opinions in their stories. Southern reporters were somewhat more objective. Write colorfully--make the battle come alive for your readers!

Web sites that may be helpful include:

http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/mdbquery.html **(To Search Input the name of the battle in the database section)**

http://sunsite/utk.edu/civil-war/warweb.html

http://www2.cr.nps.gov/abpp/battles/bystate.htm

Biographer:

You will be writing biographies of the generals in charge of the army you are following and the leader of the army you engage in battle. Your biography will include information such as when and where the general was born and into what sort of family. Where was he educated? What sort of soldier did he become? How did he become a general? What sort of leader is he? You will also be asked, in the name of your general, to write a letter to the parents of your friend, the soldier (laundress/cook) informing them of his/her death. This will be a very sad duty for you.

To find this information you may consult encyclopedias, biographical dictionaries, and online resources. To search online, enter the generals name. To save time, print out information you find on-line for later reading.

Remember, the biography must be written in your own words, synthesizing the information you find. Be sure to document your information sources and include them with your biography.

http://civilwar.si.edu/
http://sunsite.utk.edu/civil-war/generals.html

Soldier (laundress/cook):

You are the eyewitness to a soldier's daily life and will be recording your observations in letters home to your families, sweethearts/wives, and friends. What is life like for an ordinary soldier between and during battles? Remember, you will write differently to your parents than to your siblings or friends. Writing to parents will be more formal. Letters to

friends will most likely contain slang expressions of the time. There are many examples of letters on the Web that can help you with this assignment. You may print out letters and slang lists to help you. You may also wish to keep a brief diary of daily events that will be found in your pocket after your death. The soldier dies in battle after writing his/her fourth letter home. (If you have elected to be a laundress or cook, you may take a stray bullet or be involved in an accident involving heavy equipment or horses. Perhaps you linger long enough to dictate a farewell letter.)

The following Web sites will be helpful:

http://www.cwc.lsu.edu/cwc/links/links6.htm#Diaries
http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/women/cwdocs.html

The Group:

Your tasks as a group are to (1) help each other find and understand the information needed to fulfill your individual roles, and (2) work together to assemble your memoir for publication. The soldier has died, so that person will become the editor—in—chief and oversee assembly and production of the memoir, keeping everyone else on task and meeting deadlines.

Once completed, you will present the memoir to your class. Each person will present his/her role in character and be prepared to answer questions from the class regarding generals, battles, and daily life.

Evaluating Your Work

Both your teacher and your peers using criteria agreed upon will evaluate your work by the class prior to the beginning of the project. You will receive four separate grades as follows:

1. The quality of your written work. Is it detailed, complete, correct as to form and based on fact?

2. The quality of the group product, i.e., the memoir. Does it contain the work of all four participants? Is it well organized and neatly presented? Is required documentation included?

3. The quality of your presentation to the class. Did you perform in character? Did you tell your story well? Were you able to answer questions from the class?

4. Your participation in your group. This grade will be issued by your group members, individually and confidentially using the Group Evaluation form.

Teacher Notes

Grade/Unit: Grade 8, Unit 10

California Academic Standards address by this lesson for the eighth grade include:

8.10 Students analyze the multiple causes, key events and complex consequences of the Civil War in terms of:

> 5. The views and lives of leaders and soldiers on both sides of the war, including black soldiers and regiments (e.g., biographies of Ulysses S. Grant, Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee)
> 6. Critical developments in the war, including the major battles, geographical advantages and obstacles, technological advances, and Lees surrender at Appomattox
> 7. How the war affected combatants, with the largest death toll of any war in American history, and the physical devastation, the effect on civilians, and the effect on future warfare

Language Arts Standards

Grade 8

Research and Technology

> 1.4 Students plan and conduct multiple-step information searches using computer networks and modem-delivered services.

1.5 Students achieve effective balance between researched information and original information.

Writing Applications

2.1 Students write biographies, autobiographies, short stories and narratives that:

Relate a clear, coherent incident, event, or situation by using well chosen details.Reveal the significance of, or the writer's attitude about the subject.Employ narrative and descriptive strategies (e.g., relevant dialogue, specific action, physical description, background.

2.2 Students write responses to literature that:

a. Exhibit careful reading and insight in their interpretations.
   b. Connect the student's own responses to the writer's techniques and to specific textual references.
   c. Draw supported inferences about the effects of a literary work on it's audience.
   d. Support judgments through references to the text, other works, other authors, or to personal knowledge.

2.3 Students write research reports that:

e. Define a thesis.
   f. Record important ideas, concepts, and direct quotations from significant information sources, paraphrase and summarize as appropriate.
   g. Use a variety of primary and secondary sources and distinguish the nature and value of each.

This lesson is meant to provide an opportunity for a class to cover as broad a spectrum of the Civil War as possible in the shortest amount of time possible. Time needed to complete the lesson will vary depending on resource availability, however three weeks is recommended assuming a schedule of one 50 minute period per day.

Allow time at the beginning of the lesson to develop a grading rubric with the class for the different elements of the lesson. A useful Web site with information for involving students in the assessment process may

be found at
http://www.interactiveclassroom.com/articles_006.htm

The site provides a model for students to design their own grading rubric. By doing so, students have an opportunity to really understand grading criteria and internalize them before beginning the work of the lesson.

Groups should be heterogeneous and assigned by the teacher.

Groups should be given as much freedom as possible to choose the army and campaign they wish to research. The teacher should, however, encourage groups to examine a range of options with a view toward each group choosing a different campaign. The idea is to have each group teach the class about a different aspect of the War, not force the class to listen to seven presentations of the Battle of Gettysburg!

Lesson Extensions

For teachers with the technical capabilities and expertise, the product of this lesson can be done as a multimedia presentation. The addition of a soundtrack featuring music of the period would be a wonderful enhancement requiring additional student research.

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When Johnny Went Marching Off....

Group Evaluation

Your Name:

Name of Project:

List the names of the members of your group:

Reflections:

What I learned from this project:

What I did best was...

What I could have done better was...

Our group worked:

1. Well together
2. Had some problems but worked them out
3. Did not work well together

Please assign a grade for participation to each member of your group. Write the grade next to thier name as written above.

A= Participated fully, did extra work

B= Did above average work

C= Did an average job

D= Did the least amount of work possible

F= Did no work

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